Presuppositions and Common Ground in Utterances Between Characters With Social Class Issues in the *Crazy Rich Asians*

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Abstract. Crazy Rich Asians is a romantic comedy movie that raises the theme of social class. The issue of social class can be found by observing the context and utterances of the speakers and interlocutors in the movie. This study aims to identify, analyze, and describe the types of presuppositions and common ground in the conversations between the characters in the Crazy Rich Asians movie with of social class issue in it. So that the meaning contained in the speech between the characters in it can be conveyed well. This study uses a qualitative method with a note-taking method as a data collection method. Where data is obtained by observing the utterances between the characters in the movie. The data will then be analyzed using matching techniques, and the results are presented descriptively. The results of the study showed 15 which have been analyzed data contained presuppositions. The data is divided into one existential presupposition, four factual presuppositions, four lexical presuppositions, four structural presuppositions, one non-factual presupposition, and one counterfactual presupposition. In this study, presuppositions analyzed are inseparable from the issue of social class.

Keywords: Common Ground; Conversation Analysis; Presupposition; Qualitative Study; Social Class.

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of pragmatics in linguistics focuses on the meaning of utterances as it relates to the context of communication. Yule (1996) defines pragmatics as the study of meaning communicated by speakers and interpreted by listeners. In understanding utterances, context, such as who is speaking, when, where, and in what situation, significantly influences the interpretation of meaning. One important area of study in pragmatics is presuppositions, namely the assumptions a speaker holds before uttering a particular utterance (Yule, 2006). These presuppositions can be identified through linguistic indicators and are frequently found in everyday conversation. For example, in the sentence "Have you seen Lily? She should have been here 10 minutes ago," it can be assumed that someone named Lily had an appointment and was late.

Presuppositions are also closely related to common ground, namely information shared by the speaker and the interlocutor. The closer the relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor the greater the common ground they will have, which helps in understanding the implied meaning of an utterance. This study uses utterances between characters in the movie "Crazy Rich Asians" as a data source because the movie addresses social issues related to class differences. Social class, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2003), is a relatively permanent grouping of people based on shared values, interests, and behaviors. Social class is determined by factors of wealth, power, and prestige, which influence an individual's lifestyle and life chances. This inequality often gives rise to social conflict, which is also depicted in movies.

Movie, as an entertainment medium, often incorporates social messages, including issues of social class that are relevant to societal realities. Therefore, Crazy Rich Asians was chosen as the analytical material to examine presuppositions in the context of social class differences.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the use of presuppositions and common ground in the Crazy Rich Asians movie that related to issues of social class, and to examine how these influence meaning and understanding between characters. Furthermore, this study also examines the role of social class issues in strengthening interaction and communication through a pragmatic analysis of implied presuppositions in the movie's dialogue. This research is limited to the utterances which contains social class issues in it.

The formulation of the research problem includes three things: (1) the types of presuppositions that appear in the utterances between characters, (2) the relationship between presuppositions and social class issues based on context and common ground, and (3) the forms of common ground had by the speakers and interlocutors in the movie.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Pragmatics

According to Yule (1996: 3), pragmatics is the study of meaning conveyed by speakers (both writers and speakers) and interpreted by listeners (readers) based on situational context. This indicates that speakers assume their interlocutors understand what is being discussed. To achieve the intended meaning, both speakers and interlocutors need to pay attention to the context and situation at the time of the utterances. Pragmatics also encompasses the background, beliefs, attitudes, and shared understandings between speakers and interlocutor in using language to convey information, persuade, or mislead. Peccei (1999: 2) adds that pragmatics focuses on aspects of meaning that cannot be explained solely through linguistic knowledge but also require knowledge of the social and physical world. The focus of pragmatic analysis is not on the meaning of words or sentences, but rather on the meaning of utterances as they emerge in specific situations. Thus, pragmatics emphasizes how speakers convey their intentions and how listeners interpret meaning based on context and common ground.

Presuppositions and The Types of Presuppositions

Presuppositions come from the word "to presuppose," which means to assume beforehand or to have an initial assumption before utterance is made. Yule (1996: 25) explains that presuppositions are something a speaker assumes before producing an utterance. He also adds that presuppositions relate to the use of various words, phrases, and structures that reflect

the speaker's assumptions (Yule, 1996: 27). Nababan (1987) defines presuppositions as the basis of conversation used by speakers before uttering their utterances, both verbally and in writing. Levinson (1983: 168) argues that presuppositions are background beliefs that must be shared by both the speaker and the listener for the utterance to be appropriate to the context. Peccei (1999: 19) adds that presuppositions arise from the relationship between words and grammatical structures in an utterance, as well as from how language users interpret these structures. Based on Yule's theory (1996: 27–30), presuppositions are divided into six types: potential, factual, lexical, structural, non-factive, and counterfactual.

Common Ground

Yule (2006: 86) states that anything shared during the communication process can be considered as common ground. This common ground helps speakers and listeners understand messages better and prevent misunderstandings. Jucker (2009: 15) adds that the closer the relationship between speaker and interlocutor the greater their common ground, it's due to shared experiences and cultural context. In pragmatic analysis, context plays a crucial role in interpreting utterances because it is closely related to presuppositions.

Conteks

Context serves as the background for communication. According to Mulyana (2005: 21), context is a factor that shapes communication, while Nadar (2009: 4) defines it as a situation that enables interaction between speakers and listeners so that utterances can be understood. Saifudin (2019: 116) explains that context resides in the human mind and contains knowledge used to understand speech. Rahardi (2005: 51) also states that context includes background knowledge that helps the interlocutor interpret the speaker's intention. Therefore, context plays a crucial role in avoiding misunderstandings during communication.

Social Class and Its Types

Social class is the division of society based on economic factors, education, and occupation. Berger (1980) defines it as a form of social stratification in which a person's position is determined by economic criteria. Weber (1998) adds that social class reflects groups of people with equal life opportunities, while Marx, as cited by F. Magnis Suseno (2001: 117), explains that social class differences have existed since the post-feudal era and have been a source of social conflict (Setiadi, 2008). In general, social class is divided into three categories: upper, middle, and lower class.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive method. According to Indriantoro and Supomo (1999), descriptive research aims to accurately measure social phenomena, while Bogdan and Taylor (2004:3) explain that qualitative methods produce data in the form of written or spoken words from observed behavior. The research data were obtained from the utterances of characters in the "Crazy Rich Asians" movie (2018), an adaptation of the novel by Kevin Kwan (2013), which represent a relationship between social classes. The data collection technique used is the listen and note-taking method, as explained by Sugiyono (2014:308), focusing on utterances containing presuppositions related to social class issues.

Data analysis used the matching method, in which researchers identified and grouped types of presuppositions according to Yule's theoretical classification, then explained the results descriptively. Referring to Bogdan and Biklen (2005:248), qualitative analysis includes organizing, sorting, and discovering patterns of meaning in the data. The results of the research are presented informally with narrative descriptions (Sudaryanto, 1993:145). This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the pragmatic study, particularly on presuppositions and common ground, as well as practical benefits in the form of a deeper understanding of the relationship between linguistic aspects and social class issues in movie.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Brief of Crazy Rich Asians

Crazy Rich Asians is a romantic comedy movie released in 2018 and directed by Jon M. Chu. It is adapted from the 2013 novel with the same name by Kevin Kwan. The story focuses on the relationship between Nicholas Young and Rachel Chu, who face various conflicts due to their social class differences (Kwan, 2013). The issue of social class is a central theme, evident in various utterances between the characters, particularly through the character of Eleanor, Nick's mother, who frequently touches on differences in social status. Rachel is depicted as a professor of Chinese descent born and raised in America, while Nick comes from a wealthy family in Singapore. These differrent backgrounds spark resistance, particularly from Nick's family. In this research, the utterances between characters in the Crazy Rich Asians movie is used as the object for a presupposition analysis to identify how social class issue are represented. An research of the presuppositions and common ground between the characters is expected to strengthen evidence of social class inequality in the movie.

Presentation of Data Results

Based on the analysis of the movie "Crazy Rich Asians," there is six types of presuppositions emerged in the characters' dialogue. These types include potential presupposition, factive presuppositions, lexical presuppositions, structural presuppositions, non-factive presupposition, and counterfactual presupposition.

Existential Presuppositions

Existential presuppositions indicate existence through the use of definite words and sentences that indicate ownership in the speech.

Data 1

The conversation takes place when Rachel visits Peik Lin's house and informs her that she has come to Singapore to meet Nick's family. Peik Lin and her family are shocked to learn that the Nick in question is Nick Young, the descendant of a prominent Asian family.

  a. Peik Lin: *The Nick you're dating is Nick Young?!*
  b. Neenah: *(puts it together) His best friend... You're invited to Colin Khoo's wedding, ah?!!*
  c. Rachel: *Yeah. You guys know them or something?*
  d. Wye Mun: *Hells yeah. <u>The Khoos, the Youngs, I mean, who doesn't know who they are?!</u> They're just the biggest developers in all of Singapore. And Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, New Mexico.* (00:31:02–00:31:26)

Presuppositions:

  a. There are people who are referred to The Khoos.
  b. There are people who are referred to The Youngs.
  c. There is a person called Wye Mun.
  d. Everybody knows The Khoos and The Youngs.

Utterance (4) contains the existential presupposition that the Khoo and Young families exist and are widely known. This is evident in Wye Mun's amazed reaction upon learning Nick's identity. The common ground on this utterances is that Nick comes from a wealthy and influential family. The Peik Lin family's shocked reaction suggests that Rachel was unaware of her partner's high social status, further emphasizing the class gap in their relationship.

Factive Presuppositions

Factive presuppositions emerge through verbs such as know, realize, regret, or glad, which indicate that the events mentioned are factual.

Data 2

The conversation takes place after Rachel and Nick's family make dumplings. While lost in the Young family home, Rachel meets Eleanor and discusses Eleanor's engagement ring, which was apparently given by Nick's father because Ah Ma refused to give her a family ring due to class differences.

a. Eleanor: *I didn't come from the right family, have the right connections. And Ah Ma thought I would not make an adequate wife to her son.*

b. Rachel: *But, she came around, obviously.* (01:12:29–01:12:38)

Presuppositions:

a. There is person called Eleanor.

b. Eleanor comes from a different social class than the Young family.

Utterance (5) contains the factive presupposition that Eleanor does not come from a prominent family like the Young family. This presupposition comes from Eleanor's statement that her relationship was opposed by Ah Ma. The emerging common ground on this utterance is that Eleanor was eventually accepted by the Young's family after adapting to their social environment. The issue of social class in this utterances is that in Ah Ma's view Eleanor is unfit to be her son's wife due to her different social status. This aligns with Toft and Jarnes's (2021) view that the upper class tends to choose partners from the same social class.

Lexical Presuppositions

Lexical presupposition is a form of presupposition in which the meaning of a statement is implied. The following is an analysis of data containing lexical presupposition.

Data 3

After Eleanor reveals Rachel's family background, and makes Rachel experiencing deep sadness. Rachel meets her at the Mahjong hall to ask why she dislikes her. Eleanor explains that Rachel is not one of them because she's from America.

a. Eleanor: *There's a Hokkien phrase. Ka gi lan. It means "our own kind of people." And you're not our own kind.*

b. Rachel: *'Cause I'm not rich? 'Cause I didn't go to a British boarding school or I wasn't born into a wealthy family?*

    c. Eleanor: *You're a foreigner. American. And all Americans think about is their own happiness.* (01:43:34–01:44:00)

Presuppositions:

    a. There is a person called Rachel.

    b. There is a group of people referred to as "our own kind."

    c. Rachel wasn't part of that kind of the group.

Utterance (7) contains a lexical presupposition through the word "our own kind," which indicates a difference in identity between Rachel and Eleanor's group. This come from Eleanor that stated Rachel was not part of them because she was foreigner.The common ground that emerges is that Nick's partner should come from the same social and cultural environment, the elite Chinese community. The social class issue is that as a Chinese-American Rachel is perceived as having different values and culture than upper-class Asian families which reflecting stereotypes about Westerners as more individualistic.

Structural Presuppositions

Structural presuppositions are presuppositions used with a specific structure to convey an utterance. Typically, these presuppositions are used in interrogative sentences within an utterance.

Data 4

Nick and Rachel go to Rawa Island with their friends. Colin then invites Nick to the remote island and discusses Nick's relationship with Rachel, questioning whether his family will accept her.

    a. Eddie: *Oh, my God, Nick. What are you worried about? You don't have to keep Rachel happy. She's just lucky to be here.*

    b. Colin: *Nice, Eddie.*

    c. Eddie: *Oh, what? So do we pretend like that's not the truth? Are we in some kinda fairy tale story that I don't know about? Did you find a shoe at midnight and jump in a pumpkin? Yo, I got so much shit about marrying Fiona and her parents own the biggest shipping company in Hong Kong. (to Colin) Hey, Araminta's adorable, but you think your dad would be spending millions on this wedding if her parents didn't own a billion dollar resort chain? What's Rachel bringing to the table?* (01:00:22–01:00:52)

Presuppositions:

    a. There is someone called Rachel.

    b. Rachel has a different class from Eddie and Colin's partner.

c. Rachel has nothing to compare with them.

Utterance (12) contain structural presuppositions through Colin's question, which assumes Nick's family will not accept Rachel because of her social status. The common ground that emerges is Rachel different from Eddie and Colin which can be seen from Eddie's description of his partner's qualities. The issue of social class is reflected in the view that upper-class families tend to seek partners of equal status, while Nick rejects this norm by choosing based on love, not class.

Non-factive presuppositions

Non-factive presuppositions are presuppositions that are assumed to be false. These presuppositions are usually marked by verbs such as dream and imagine. The following is an analysis of data containing non-factive presuppositions.

Data 5

Eleanor is reading the Bible with her friends when they discuss Rachel, the girl Nick will bring to Colin's wedding. Since no one knows Rachel, they speculate about her family origins.

a. Jacqueline: *Amanda knows everyone and she has never heard of her.*
b. Nadine: <u>*Rachel Chu. Or maybe she's from the Taiwan plastics Chu family?*</u>
c. Alix: *(low; conspiratorial) If you want, I have a private investigator. Very discreet.* (00:08:07–00:08:20)

Presuppositions :

a. There is a person called Rachel.
b. They didn't know which family Rachel is from.
c. Rachel wasn't from the Taiwan Plastics Chu family.

Utterance (14) is non-factive presuppositions because Nadine is only guessing without certainty. The common ground that emerges is that they didn't know the origins of Rachel's family and only speculating. The issue of social class is evident in the importance of family background in upper-class community, where upper-class communities will more likely to have partners in the upper class than newcomers to that class. (Toft & Jarnes, 2021).

Counterfactual Presuppositions

Counterfactual presuppositions are presuppositions that contradict the actual situation. These presuppositions usually use an "if clause" in their utterances.

Data 6

After Eleanor stated that Rachel wasn't right for Nick, Rachel told Peik Lin about it. They imagined Rachel leaving Nick for a million dollars.

    a. Peik Lin: *You know, I bet <u>if you told her you'd leave Nick for a million dollars, she will write that check.</u> They do that around here—*

    b. Rachel: *—And she looked at me like I was nothing...* (01:14:04–01:15:00)

Presuppositions:

    a. There is a person called Rachel.

    b. There is a person called Eleanor.

    c. Peik Lin wondering Rachel will get a million dollars if she left Nick.

    d. Rachel didn't leave Nick.

Utterance (16) shows counter-factual presuppositions because Peik Lin's statement is not actually happen. The common ground is that Rachel will not leave Nick for money. The issue of social class is seen from the view that money can be used to control relationships, reflecting the way of thinking of the upper class who judge everything through material things.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the study of the movie "Crazy Rich Asians" indicate that the utteraces between character in the movie contain presuppositions and common ground related to social class issues. The analyzed data all fall into the category of presuppositions addressing social class issues. Six types of presuppositions were identified: one existential presupposition, four factive presuppositions, four lexical presuppositions, four structural presuppositions, one non-factive presupposition, and one counter-factual presupposition. In addition to presuppositions, this study also examined common ground between characters, as presuppositions are closely related to this aspect. The issue of social class was used as the focus of analysis to show that this phenomenon can be studied through a pragmatic perspective, especially with the Presuppositions and common ground approach. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that Presuppositions and the issue of social class have a close relationship, because most of the utterances related to social class in this movie are conveyed implicitly. Common ground between the speaker and the interlocutor also clarifies the communication process between characters, so the use of Presuppositions analysis is important to uncover implied meanings in conversations.

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